A SERMON

PREACH'D before the

QUEEN,

AT

Saint *JAMES*'s Chapel,

On *November the* 5*th*, 1705.

MATTH. X. Ver. 16.

Behold I send you forth as Sheep in the midst of Wolves; be ye therefore Wise as Serpents, and Harmless as Doves.

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MATTH. X. Ver. 16.

Behold I ſend you forth as Sheep in the midſt of Wolves: be ye therefore wiſe as Serpents, and harmleſs as Doves.

THE Holy Evangeliſt has given us, in this Chapter, an Authentick Copy of a Commiſſion, which iſſued from the Higheſt Authority; which convey'd the fulleſt Powers that were ever granted to any of the Sons of Men; which was not to be executed without the utmoſt difficulty and Danger; but was accompanied with ſuch Inſtructions, as, if duly obſerv'd, would render all diffiulties ſuperable, and be a ſure Guard againſt all Dangers. This Commiſſion was given to the *Apoſtles* by our *Saviour, The Bleſſed and only Potentates, the King of of Kings, and Lord of Lords*: It's Purport was to reſcue not one People or Nation, but the whole Race of Mankind, from a ſtate of the moſt abject and wretched Slavery; to put an end to the Tyranny of a proud and cruel Uſurper, and to eſtabliſh the Kingdom of God upon Earth. Such a Deſign as this, which threatned an entire overthrow to the Dominion of *Satan*, would be ſure to meet with all the Oppoſition that the Fury of Hell could raiſe againſt it: and tho' from the Succeſs of it, Men might promiſe to themſelves the moſt perfect Liberty, and an affluence of the greateſt Bleſſings, yet they were grown ſo much in love with their Chains, and were ſo inſenſible of their true Intereſt, that they alſo would unite all their Forces to ſtop the Progreſs, to defeat the Enterprize, and to outrage the Perſons of thoſe, who came for their Deliverence. The Meſſage, which the *Apoſtles* were to carry into all Places whither they were to go, was, *Peace upon Earth, and Good-will towards Men*: but the Entertainment they were every where to look for, was Hatred, Perſecution, and Death. They muſt not hope, that the Sacredneſs of their Character, and the Majeſty of Him, by whom they were ſent, would ſecure them from Indignities and Wrongs: for they were to repreſent a Deſpis'd, Inſulted, and Perſecuted Maſter; and from the Reception which he had found, might plainly foreſee what ſort of Treatment they were to expect. *The Diſciple*, he tells them, *is not above his Maſter, nor the Servant above his Lord: It is enough for the Diſciple that he be as his Maſter, and the Servant as his Lord.* Naked and unarmed they were to expoſe themſelves

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ſelves to the Rage of Stiff-neck'd, Hard-hearted, and Mercileſs People: Againſt ſuch they are taught to provide; they are allow'd to uſe no other Arms, than Wiſdom and Innocence; *Behold I ſend you forth as Sheep in the midſt of Wolves; be ye therefore wiſe as Serpents, and harmleſs as Doves.*

The Wiſdom of the Serpent might ſeem to include in the Notion of it, ſome degrees of Subtilty and Guilt: The Simplicity of the Dove might be thought to intimate ſome Defect of Warineſs and Prudence: Our *Saviour* therefore requires ſuch a Temperature of both, that what was wanting in Either, might be ſupplied from the Superabundance of the other; ſo that from their Conjunction might reſult perfect Wiſdom, free from all Guile; and a well-guarded Innocence, without the leaſt mixture of Indiſcretion.

Higher degrees of Wiſdom and Integrity were requiſite in the *Apoſtles*, than are abſolutely neceſſary to every Diſciple of *Chriſt*: for they were to lay the firſt Foundations of that *Church*, againſt which *the Gates of Hell were never to prevail*; and their Eminence in Wiſdom and Virtue would, in a great meaſure, prevent the Miſchief, that might redound to our holy Faith from any Defect of the like Qualifications in thoſe *Chriſtians*, who ſhould come after them: But ſince the Church of God in all Ages is beſt preſerv'd by the ſame methods, by which it was as firſt Eſtabliſhed, the ſame Qualifications of Prudence and Innocence, which were neceſſary for the Planting of *Chriſt's Church*, are, tho' in more ſcanty proportions, ſtill requiſite for its Support and Maintenance. But neither are equal Meaſures of theſe Graces at this time requir'd in all *Chriſtians*: Much leſs Detriment would enſue to the Church of God from the want of either of theſe in private Perſons, who are only to adorn it with their Lives, than from the like want in Paſtors, who are to guide It by their Vigilance, or in Magiſtrates, who are to protect It by their Authority: And therefore larger proportions of Wiſdom and Integrity are requir'd in Princes, who are *to go out and come in before God's People*, than are neceſſary in thoſe, who being plac'd under their Government, reap the Benefit of their wiſe and juſt Adminiſtration: A more plentiful ſhare of God's *Urim* and *Thummim*, brightneſs of Underſtanding, and perfection of Virtue, ought to reſt upon his *Holy Ones, who are* by their Doctrines and Examples *to teach Jacob God's Judgments, and Iſrael his Laws*, than are of nececeſſity requir'd in thoſe, who are *to ſeek the Law at their Mouths*: But tho' higher Degrees of Wiſdom and Innocence are requir'd in ſome *Chriſtians* than in others,

yet the Duties themſelves are not appropriated to any Orders of Men: All who are numbred among the Sheep of *Chriſt*, all who are in the midſt of Wolves, are concern'd in this wholſome Advice of our *Saviour*, *Be ye wiſe as Serpents, and harmleſs as Doves.*

Were Wiſdom and Innocence ſo cloſely link'd together, that they were never to be found aſunder, or were they ſingly ſufficiently to the purpoſes of Life, ſo that there was little or no harm from their being ſeparated, this Precept of our *Saviour* would be leſs neceſſary: But the Ill-conſequences of their Diſunion, the Expediences of their Conjunction, and conſequently the Neceſſity of our obſerving this Precept of our *Lord*, will evidently appear, if we take a View,

I. Of the great Miſchiefs that ariſe from the want of Wiſdom in thoſe that are Harmleſs.

II. Of the ſtill greater Miſchiefs that ariſe from the want of Innocence in thoſe that are Wiſe.

III. Of the mighty Advantages that reſult from our being at the ſame time both *Wiſe as Serpents and Harmleſs as Doves.*

Of theſe Heads I ſhall firſt ſpeak in General, tho' not without an Eye all along to our Enemies of the *Church of Rome*; to whom I ſhall afterwards more particularly apply what ſhall have been delivered.

Firſt then: Let Us take a View of the great Miſchiefs that ariſe from the want of Wiſdom in thoſe that are Harmleſs.

There is ſo near an Affinity between Wiſdom and Goodneſs, that, according to the Notions of the *Moraliſts*, Prudence is an Eſſential Ingredient of every Virtue; and even according to the Language of Holy Writ, which is much more to be depended upon, Wiſdom and Piety, Folly and Wickedneſs, are Terms equivalent. But then this muſt be underſtood rather of the higheſt Perfection of Virtue, conſider'd in *Theory*, than of thoſe lower Degrees of it, which are to be met with in Common Practice; for Experince aſſures us, that there are many Perſons, whoſe Hearts are ſincere and upright, and who make it their earneſt and unwhearied Study *to have a Conſcience void of Offence, both towards God, and towards Man*; of whom notwithſtanding it muſt be confeſs'd, That they do not more excel others in Virtue and Piety, than they are ſurpaſs'd by others in ſharpneſs of Wit, in ſubtility of Counſels, and depth of Underſtanding. They have Wiſdom ſufficient to have their own Souls, and to obtain Eternal Happineſs in the Life to

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come; but they have not Circumſpection enough to eſpy, nor all th Dexterity that is neceſſary, to eſcape thoſe manifold Danners, to which they are expos'd in their paſſage thro' a wicked and deceitful World. There is in them a ſweetneſs of Nature, and tenderneſs of Conſcience, which will not ſuffer them to do the leaſt Injury to any: Hence they are not apt to ſuſpect any evil Intentions in others toward them; and for want of this due Caution, are unprovided againſt the Attempts of Crafty and Ill-deſigning Men. They from their Judgments of Mankind, not from Obſervations of what is done abroad, which theſe good Men ſeldom make, but from Reflections upon what paſſes within their own Breaſts, which they are much more intent upon; hence they frame a probable Opinion of the Integrity of others, from what they certainly know of their own: and as it hath been obſerv'd to be a frequent Error, and very familiar with Wiſe Men, to meaſure other Perſons by the Model of their own Abilities, and therefore often to ſhoot over the Mark, as ſuppoſing Men to project to themſelves deeper Ends, and to practice more ſubtil Arts, than ever came into their Thoughts; ſo is it a no leſs frequent miſtake with very good Men, who meaſure others by the Standard of their owe Uprightneſs, to think of them, and to deal with them, as if they were much more honeſt, than they truly are.

There is in good *Chriſtians* ſo great an Hatred of all Falſhood and Diſſimulation, that it would not only give a deep wound to their Conſciences, but would even do a violence to their Natures to tell a known Lie; and thinking others to be fram'd juſt as they are, and to act upon the ſame Principles, as they do, they are too liable to be impos'd upon by Men of falſe Tongues, and deceitful Lips: whatever is barely affirm'd, is by them eaſily credited; what is vouch'd with ſolemn Aſſeverations, leaves ſtill leſs room in their Breaſts for Doubt: what is confirmed by Oaths, and ratified by an Appeal to the Omniſcience, and an Imprecation of the Vengeance of God, has with them all the Force and Credibily of a Self-evident and *Mathematical* Truth. And as honeſt and ſincere *Chriſtians* are thus apt to lay themſelves open to the Practices of others by their too great Credulity, ſo alſo are they wont to diſcover thoſe Secrets of their own Hearts, which might with a good Conſcience be concealed, and which cannot without Prejudice be diſcloth'd, thro' their too great Freedom and Oppenneſs: They are ſo much afraid of diſguiſing their Thoughts by Lying and Hyocriſy, that they often want that

prudent Reſervedneſs, which is no way inconſiſtent with the ſincerity of a downright Honeſt Man, or the ſimplicity of a Good Chriſtian; they bear Teſtimony of themſelves and of their inward ſentiments, even in their ordinary Converſation, as if they were to give Evidence upon their Oath at the Bar; and deem it not ſufficient to maintain the Character of their Veracity, that they ſpeak nothing but what is true, unleſs they at the ſame time ſpeak out all the truth. That *Lying Lips are abomination to the Lord*, is an *Aphoriſm*, which never ſlips out of the thoughts of theſe honeſt and well-meaning Perſons: but they are often apt to forget that other Obſervation of *Solomon*, That *A Fool uttereth all his Mind, but a Wiſe-man keepeth it in till afterwards.* For want of this prudent Reſerve, they heedleſly incur Dangers; which, without any Prejudice to their Virtue, they might eſcape, if they would but call in the Succours of Wiſdom to their own neceſſary Defence. Where theſe are not call'd in, Men are apt to avoid one Extream by running into another, which, tho' equally ſinful, may be very hazardous; ſo far are they from revenging Injuries, as to invite them; ſo far from being Cruel, as to be tame; ſo far from hating their Enemies, as to cheriſh them; ſo far from perſecuting, as not to fence and guard themſelves againſt Perſecution; ſo far from uſing thoſe offenſive Weapons of Force and Oppreſſion, which the *Goſpel* forbids, as not to make uſe of thoſe defenſive Arms of Prudence and Caution, which the Soldiers of *Chriſt* are both allow'd and requir'd to be Expert in.

When the Wiſe-man adviſeth us *to ſearch after Wiſdom, to put our Feet into her Fetters, and our Neck into her Chains*, he aſſures us, for our Encouragement, That *her Fetters ſhall be a ſtrong Defence for us, and her Chains a Robe of Glory.* We have ſeen ſome of the Miſchiefs which happen to Virtuous Men, thro' want of this Defence; and it would not be difficult to ſhew what farther detriment accrues to Vertue it ſelf, from the lack of this Ornament. For when Men, thro' a Natural Diſpoſition to Goodneſs, are very Honeſt, but thro' a Defect of good Underſtanding, are not equally Wiſe, this unguarded Simplicity is too apt to betray them into ſome little Weakneſſes and Indiſcretions, which may caſt a Blemiſh both on them, and on thoſe Vertues, which they practiſe but in an unbeeoming manner, and with an ill Grace: And tho' Good-nature and Chriſtian Charity ſhould over-look a few ſmall Faults in thoſe, who are conſpicuous for many eminent Virtues; yet, in an Ill-nature and Uncharitable World, the want of Diſcretion in good Men may chance to caſt a greater Blemiſh on

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ligion, than the Honour done it by their Virtue and Integrity will ever be able to wipe off.

Let any one calmly conſider, how contemptible a Figure Devotion makes, when it degenerates into Superſtition; how great miſchief Zeal has done in the World, when it has wanted the guidance of Diſcretion; and how often Conſcientious Perſons have unwittingly been made the Inſtruments of Men of no Conſcience, to bring about their moſt wicked purpoſes, and he will be convinc'd of the neceſſity of *adding to our Virtue Knowledge*, and of joining the *Wiſdom of the Serpent, to the Innocence of the Dove.*

That Prudence, which is by our Saviour preſcrib'd as the moſt proper Preſervative againſt the Rage of Perſecutors, is more eſpecially neceſſary to guard Us of the *Reform'd Religion* againſt the furious Attempts and ſubtle Machinations of our ſworn, inveterate and inplacable Enemies of the *Church of Rome.* If the *Wiſdom of the Serpent* was therefore neceſſary to the *Apoſtles*, becauſe they were *ſent forth as Sheep in the midſt of Wolves*; it becomes Us, who ate encompaſs'd with the like Adverſaries, and expos'd to the like Dangers, to Arm Our-ſelves with the like Warineſs and Precaution. We profeſs the ſame pure and undefiled Faith which the *Apoſtles* preach'd; and as our *Reformers* took eſpecial care, that our Church ſhould, as to its Doctrine Diſcipline and Worſhip, be reſtor'd to the ſame State, wherein it was by the *Apoſtles* at firſt Conſtituted; ſo the Malice of our Enemies has farther provided, That, as to its being hated alſo and perſecuted, it ſhould be Primitive and Apoſtolical. I have before obſerv'd, how difficult it is for thoſe, who are endued with the Simplicity of the Dove, to form adequate Notions of the exquiſite Malignity of which ſome Men, and even ſome *Chriſtians* are capable; Were a Good Man, who is unacquainted with the Hiſtory of this Day's Conſpiracy, to ſit down and conſider with himſelf the outmoſt Miſchief, that an Uncountroulled Malice, aſſiſted with the deepeſt ſubtilty could poſſible deviſe, Any imaginary Scheme of Wickedneſs, with ſuch a One could with the greateſt Stretch of Invention conceive, would, I am perſuaded, fall much ſhort of the Complicated Villainy of that Helliſh Deſign; and altho' we have unqueſtionable Evidence of the Truth of it, yet ſuch is it's Blackneſs, and ſo heinous it's Guilt, that it can ſcarce enter into the Heart of any Good-natur'd Man to believe that to be poſſible, which the Notoriety of the Fact leaves him no room to doubt of, But tho' ſuch wicked Deſigns before they

were diſcover'd, could not have been ſuſpected; yet after repeated Deliverances from the Attempts of *Rome*, not to be ſuſpicious of Danger from the ſame Enemies, would not be Charity, but Folly: not to be Awake, and upon our Guard againſt thoſe, who have taken ſo much pains to rouſe Us out of our Sleep, would be an Inſtance of downright *Lethargy*. It is foretold indeed, that under the *Goſpel-Diſpenſation*, the *Lamb ſhall lie down with the Wolf*; but then it is ſuppos'd, That the Wolf has firſt laid aſide his Natural Fierceneſs, and hath left off *to do hurt, and to deſtroy in God's Holy Mountains*. Bnt whilſt ſuch Ravenous *Wolves* retain their Savage Temper, whilſt there is in them an inſatiable Appetite after Blood, whilſt their Mouths are continually open to devour *Chriſt*'s Flock, Common Prudence will ſuggeſt to Us the Uſe of all Honeſt and Lawful Means to keep Our-ſelves out of their Reach; and to preſerve our Country from *Papal* Tyranny; our Laws, our Eſtates, our Liberties from *Papal* Invaſion; our Lives from *Papal* Perſecution; and our Souls from *Papal Superſtition* and *Idolatry*. God forbid, that We ſhould uſe any Inhumane, any Unchriſtian Methods, even for the compaſſing theſe good Ends; or ſhould think all thoſe means warrantable in the Service of the Beſt Cauſe, which our Enemies make no ſcruple to uſe for the Maintenance of the Worſt: far be from Us thoſe fraudulent Arts, and that Spirit of Perſecution, which we ſo heartily condemn in them: But, if there be any thing laudable in theſe Our Adverſaries, if any Means by them miſus'd for the Support of a falſe Religion, may by Us be commendably employ'd for the Advancement of the True One, let Us not diſdain to be imitators of their Wiſdom, whoſe wickedneſs We ſo deſervedly abhor. It would add great Strength to our Cauſe, if We exerted our ſelves in Defence of our *Eſtabliſh'd Church*, with that hearty Zeal, that unwearied Induſtry, and, above all, with that firm Union among Our ſelves, which we cannot but obſerve, Approve, and be afraid of in our Enemies. All the jarring Parties among the *Romaniſts*, cordially agree in promoting the Intereſt of their Church. *Franciſcains* and *Dominicains*, *Janſeniſts* and *Jeſuiſts*, *Seculars* and *Regulars*, lay aſide their mutual Quarrels, and join their Forces againſt the *Heretick*, as a Common Adverſary: And tho', notwithſtanding their ſo much boaſted Concord, there is after all neither Unanimity in Opinion, nor Uniformity of Rites in that Church, it muſt be confeſs'd, That there is among them an Union of Intereſt, which reconciles all Differences, and makes them One entire and Well-compacted Body. Thus, when the *Jews* were employ'd in the rebuilding the Holy City, we read that their Adverſaries, however divided among themſelves, were all United in Obſtructing that Work. *It came to paſs*, ſaith the Sacred Hiſtorian, *that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Aſhdodites heard, that the Walls of Jeruſalem were made up, and the Breaches began to be ſtop'd; then they were very wroth, and conſpir'd all of them together to come, and to fight againſt Jeruſalem, and to hinder it* .Neh.4. 7, 8.

Againſt this United Strength of our Enemies, we ſhould be much better able to cope, if We were as firmly combin'd in the Defence of our Religion,

gion, as they are in Aſſaulting it: If our ſcatter'd Forces were brought to a cloſer Order for the ſecuring that Church, which is moſt vigorouſly attack'd by the *Papiſts*, as being by them known to be the ſtrongeſt Bulwark againſt *Popery*. Wiſe was the Obſervation, and wholſom the Advice which *Nehemmiah* gave to the Nobles, to the Rulers, and to the reſt of the People, upon a like Occaſion; *The Work is great and large, and we are ſeparated upon the Wall, one far from another: In what place therefore ye hear the ſound of the Trumpet, reſort Ye thither unto Us; Our God ſhall fight for Us.* May our Nobles and Rulers, and the reſt of our People be thus united in the Defence of thoſe Ramparts, which the Wiſdom of our Law-givers had provided againſt the Aſſaults of *Popery:* May this *Great and Large Work* be carry'd on by Joint-aſſiſtance, and be well-concerted Meaſures: May thoſe, who at preſent are *Separated too far from One Another*, draw nearer together for their Common Defence: May Every One in his Place and Station diligently labour in this neceſſary Work: May *God fight for us*; and under God may Prudence be unto Us as a Weapon of Defence, againſt the treacherous Deſigns of our moſt Subtle, and moſt Pernicious Enemies.

Many and great are the Miſchiefs, which have been obſerv'd to ariſe from the want of Wiſdom in thoſe that are Harmleſs, but ſtill theſe are few and inconſiderable, in compariſon of thoſe, which we propos'd to conſider in the Second place,

II. The Miſchiefs that ariſe from the want of Innocence, in thoſe who are Wiſe.

Wiſdom is the Gift of God; in it ſelf Uſeful, and by the Author of it conferr'd on Us, for the nobleſt purpoſes; for the diſcovery of Truth, and the detection of Error; for the promoting of our Temporal and our Eternal Welfare; for procuring to Our-ſelves and to Others all the good things of which our Natures are capable, and for averting from Our-ſelves and Others all the Evils to which we are liable; for the ſtabliſhment and preſervation of Kingdoms and States, by wholſom Laws, wiſe Counſels, and prudent Adminiſtration. But this Talent, which is by the Author of Our Nature and the Giver of all Grace, beſtow'd upon Men for ſuch great and glorious Ends, is capable of being perverted, and is by Perſons deſtitute of that Innocence, which ought to be the inſeparable Companion of Wiſdom, often miſ-us'd to the very Worſt of Purpoſes; for the diſguiſing of Truth, and palliating of Error; for extirpating God's true Religion, and introducing a falſe One; for the fomenting Schiſms in the Church, and Tumults in the State; for diſturbing the Peace of the World, and bringing all things into Diſorder and Confuſion. The peſt and bane of Mankind, all the Sins which we commit, and all the Evils which we ſuffer, had their firſt Spring and Origine from that Serpent, *which was more ſubtle than the Creatures that the Lord God had made*; and by Perſons of the ſame Serpent-like Subtlety have all the Miſchiefs, which have ſince plagued the Sons of *Adam*, been contriv'd and carry'd on. A wiſe and ſober Heathen was wont to pronounce a Solemn Curſe againſt thoſe, who firſt found out

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the unlucky Diſtinction between *Profitable* and *Honeſt*; and ſeveral, who had only the Light of Reaſon to guide them, have judg'd it extreamly ſcandalous, not only to prefer Profit to Honeſty, but even ſo much as to bring the Former into competition with the Latter: But ſome Perſons who call themſelves *Chriſtians*, and ſome, who have appropriated to themſelves the Holy Name of *JESUS*, have thought it a plain Indication of Weakneſs and Folly to forego any thing which is greatly profitable, becauſe it is a little Diſhoneſt; and have laught at the idle Scruples of thoſe, who have given themſelves the trouble to enquire, Whether an Action be Lawful or not, after it has once appear'd Expedient.

That it is Unlawful for us to do Evil that Good may come; that we ſhould be ſtrictly careful, not only that the Cauſe we are engag'd in be Juſt, but that the Methods, whereby we promote it, be alſo Warrantable; that we ſhould chuſe rather to Suffer the Greateſt Injury, than to Do the Leaſt; that to deprive another of his juſt Right, and to promote Our own Gain by our Neighbour's Loſs, is a more intolerable Evil than Pain, than Poverty, than Death; that we ought inviolably to do the thing which is Right, and to ſpeake the Truth from our Heart; that he who ſweareth to his Neighbour, ſhould not diſappoint him, tho' it were to his own Hurt; that the Publick Weal is always to be preferr'd to our Private Intereſt; and that every Good Man ſhould be ready to ſacrifice his Eaſe, his Fortunes, his Life for the Benefit of his Country; are the Principles of undeprav'd Reaſon, and of our moſt Holy Religion: But thoſe Perſons, in whom the Wiſdom of the Serpent is ſo far predominant, as to leave no room for the Innocence of the Dove, finding that ſuch Maxims as theſe cramp them in the purſuit of their Worldly Aims, take care to ſhake off theſe cumberſom Notions; and in their ſtead take up a Set of Principles, which, tho' they are not ſo well calculated for the good of Society, are more convenient for Private Uſe. That the ſhorteſt ways to an End are fitteſt to be choſen, be they never ſo foul; that the Appearance of Virtue is an Advantage, but the Practice of it a Burden; that Charity ought to Begin at Home, and to End there too, are Maxims, which, tho' own'd by few, are by Many made the meaſures of their Actions.

Now, what Limits, what Stops can be put to the Hurt that may be done by Perſons, who have once ſtrongly imbib'd theſe Notions? by Perſons, who have Policy enough to contrive, Cunning enough to diſſemble, Inſinuation enough to perſuade, Dexterity enough to execute any Miſchief; and have no Senſe of Common Honeſty to reſtrain them, no Principle of Sound Religion to controul them; or, which is worſt of all, are, by the Prejudices of a falſe Religion, encourag'd and puſh'd on to perpetrate the greateſt Villainies! The Wiſdom of ſuch Men muſt be very Reverſe of that Wiſdom, which is from Above; it is neither pure, nor peaceable; neither Gentle, nor eaſy to be entreated; it is void of Mercy, and of good Fruits, Partial and Hypocritical. In ſhort, It is from Below, from the Old Serpent; and where it is found, there is Confuſion,

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and every Evil Work. From a Wiſdom thus *Anti-Chriſtian*, thus Senſual, thus Deviliſh, there muſt of courſe iſſue forth Miſchiefs too many to be numbred, and the leſs neceſſary to be farther inſiſted on in general, becauſe no General Diſcourſe can give Us ſo juſt and lively an Image of the Wiſdom of the Serpent, abſtracted from the Simplicity of the Dove, as We may form to Our-ſelves, by reflecting on the Willy Conduct, the ſubtle Intrigues, and the refined Policy of the Church of *Rome*.

The Intereſt and Grandeur of Holy Church is the End, which all of that Communion conſtantly, ſteadily, and regularly purſues. All their New Doctrines are ſo modell'd, all their Diſciplines ſo form'd, and all their Deſigns ſo laid, as joyntly to promote this one End. All means are judg'd not only Fit or Unfit, but even Lawful or Unlawful, according to their Expediency or Inexpediency for the Compaſſing this End. This is always uppermoſt in their View, always firſt in their Intention; and ſuch Intention ſanctifies all Methods, that may any ways contribute to the Accompliſhment of It. Treachery and Violence, Breach of Promiſes and of Oaths, Privy Conſpiracies and Open Rebellions, the Aſſaſſination of Princes, and the Maſſacre of their Subjects; the Exciſſion of a Royal Family, with all its Branches; the mingling of Kings, Nobles and Commons in one general Slaughter; the Cutting off an whole Nation, both as to its Preſent Support, and as to its Future Hopes, by one compendious Blow; the Deſtruction, not only of the Bodies, but even of the Souls of Obſtinate Hereticks, dying, acccording to theſe Mens Uncharitable Opinions, out of the Pale of the Church, and without the Means of Salvation, are all deem'd, not only Innocent and Allowable, but even Commendable and Meritorious; are juſtified by their ableſt *Caſuiſts* in their Writings; are encourag'd by the Directors of Conſciences in Private Confeſſions; are recommended to the Furtherance of *GOD*'s Bleſſing by Prayers, by Sacraments, and *Maſſes* are Celebrated with Applauſe in the Holy *Conclave*; are ratified by the Sovereign Authority of their Infallible Judge; and entitle thoſe, who are engag'd in them, to Saintſhip, to Hymns, to Incenſe, and to Religious Worſhip, as often as they are perform'd with a good Intention, and deſign'd for the Maintenance and Propagation of the *Catholick* Cauſe.

Heathen Rome, as ambitious as it was of Dominion, ſcorn'd to advance itſelf by ſuch diſhoneſt Methods, as *Chriſtian Rome* is not aſham'd to uſe for the Eſtabliſhment of its Univerſal Empire. A *Roman Conſul*, when an Overture hath been made him by the Subject of a Powerful Enemy to diſpatch his own Prince, and thereby to put an end to a dangerous War, hath generouſly rejected the Propoſal, and ſent the Traitor back to his Maſter to be puniſh'd for his Treachery. But can *Chriſtian Rome* furniſh us with ſuch an Inſtance of Moral Honeſty? Would ſuch a generous Refuſal of a mighty Advantage to the Church of *Rome* meet with as much Applauſe now in a *Conſiſtory of Cardinals*, as that formerly did in the *Roman Senate*? Would the *Holy Father* reject an Offer, which promis'd the Extirpation of *Hereſy*, and the Eabliſhment of the *Catholick Religion*;

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becauſe it could not be made good, without the Commiſſion of Treaſon? Would he Send back? would he Puniſh? would he Diſcover? would he Diſcourage the Traitor? Nay, have we not reaſon to judge, from the Hiſtory of this Day's Conſpiracy, that tho' the Ancient *Romans* were ſo ſcrupulous as to refuſe an Advantage, which could not be compaſs'd with Honeſty; yet, according to the *Caſuiſtical Divinity* of the *Modern Romaniſts*, Nothing is Diſhonourable, nothing Diſhoneſt, which may ſerve to promote the *Catholick* Intereſt? Such Practices, and ſuch Principles ſhew our Adverſaries to have a plentiful ſhare of *the Wiſdom of the Serpent*, but to be wholly deſtitute of the *Innocence of the Dove*.

Paſs we on therefore, from Men of this Infamous Character; and proceed we in the

III. place, To take a View of thoſe mighty Advantages, which reſult from our being at the ſame time both *Wiſe as Serpents*, and *Harmleſs as Doves*.

Perfect Wiſdom and perfect Holineſs are the Incommunicable Attributes of God Almighty: and as far as Men take care to excel in theſe Divine Qualities, ſo far do they approach towards the unattainable Perfections of the Godhead. Hence it is, that the *Wiſe-man*, when he would give us a lofty and becoming *Idea* of GOD cloathes Him with the ſame Armour, which our *Saviour* hath here in the Text provided for the Good *Chriſtian*: *He ſhall put on Righteouſneſs*, ſaith he, *as a Breaſt-plate, and true Judgment inſtead of an Helmet. He ſhall take Holineſs for an invincible Shield*, [Wiſd xv. 18, 19.] The immaculate Purity of GOD makes him utterly deteſt all manner of Iniquity; the Infinity of his Wiſdom places him without the Reach of any ſort of Calamity. Such a degree of unſullied Holineſs is too high for frail Man; He cannot attain unto it. Such a State of uninterrupted Bliſs is unſuitable to the Condition of poor Mortals; they muſt not hope, on this ſide the Grave, to be poſſeſs'd of it: But as far as Human Nature can go, ſo far will Wiſdom and Innocence carry Men. Integrety will make them ſtrictly careful to do nothing which is Sinful; and Prudence will guard them againſt all Miſchiefs, that are fairly avoidable.

Such is the Steadineſs of their Virtue, ſuch ſtrong hold hath Religion got of their Souls and Conſciences, that no Proſpect of Temporal Advantage can allure them, no Appearance of Danger can deter them from their Duty: And, on the other ſide, ſuch is the Soundneſs of their Judgment, that they will not lightly forego any Intereſt, which they might preſerve with a good Conſcience, or heedleſly run into any Danger, which they might eſcape without forfeiting their Integrity. Their Honeſty will not ſuffer them to do Wrong, tho' an Opportunity ſhould offer it ſelf, of doing it with Secrecy and Impunity: and their Prudence will ſecure them from being over-reach'd by the Fraud of Crafty and Treacherous Perſons, *who lie in wait to deceive*. They are too Generous, to impoſe upon Others; and too Cautious to be impos'd upon: their Sincerity never allows them, upon any occaſion, to fly to the ſordid Arts of Lying

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and Diſſimulation; and their Diſcretion puts a Bridle into their Mouths, ſo as that they do not ſuffer thoſe Truths to eſcape their Lips, which it is adviſeable to Conceal.

The *Chriſtian Religion* has taught them to *Love their Enemies, to do good to thoſe which hate them, and to pray for thoſe which deſpitefully uſe and perſecute them*: but Prudence directs them to be aware of their Enemies; to be upon their Guard againſt the malicious Deſigns of thoſe, which hate them; and to uſe all Honeſt and Lawful means of ſecuring Themſelves from deſpiteful Uſage and Perſecution. The Goodneſs of their Nature, and the Charitableneſs of their Chriſtian Temper, will not permit them to entertain evil Promiſes, vain Suſpicions, and groundleſs Jealouſies: They have not ſo bad an Opinion of Humane Nature, as to think all Perſons inclin'd to do them Wrong, who are able to do it; to look upon themſelves as Unſafe, whilſt it is in the Power of their Neighbours to Hurt them; and to eſteem it a Neceſſary part of Precaution to invade the Rights of Others, for fear that Others may invade Theirs: But, where they have been taught by long Experience, That the Power and Inclination to do miſchief go hand in hand together; where the Senſe of what they have already felt from an avow'd Enemy, leaves no room for Charity to hope for a kinder Treatment; where they find their Adverſaries graſping after an Encreaſe of Power, with a manifeſt Intention of Imploying it to Their Ruin, there Wiſdom awakes their Vigilance, and ſets them upon their guard, to do every thing which Religion allows, and Prudence preſcribes, for their own Preſervation.

The Integrity of ſuch Men, will not ſuffer them to do any thing, which their Conſciences tell them is Sinful; and their Diſcretion will inſtruct them, how to fence their Innocent and Laudable Actions againſt the Danger of being miſtaken by the Ignorant, or miſ-repreſented by the malicious. A due Senſe of Religion, and an awful Fear of *GOD*, is the firſt and Governing Principle, which influences all their Thoughts, and Words, and Actions, and makes them rigorouſly careful to do nothing, which may offend Him, *Who ſees the Inmoſt Secrets of their Hearts*; and, when they have thus taken care to approve themſelves in the Sight of *GOD*, their Wiſdom doth farther direct them to place their Virtues in ſuch an advantagious Light, as may beſt cover them from the Calumnies of their Adverſaries; ſo that *their Good may not be evil ſpoken of*.

Wiſdom, tho' not neceſſary in the ſame degre with Honeſty, yet when join'd with it, is of marvellous uſe to give a due Luſtre to Vertue, and to ſet it out to the beſt Advantage. That Good Actions may not want the utmoſt Beauty they are capable of, nor fail to gain the Praiſe and Admiration of all, who obſerve them, thoſe *Chriſtians*, who are eminently wiſe, as well as virtuous, do always take ſtrict care, that their Actions be, not only as the Subſtance and Matter of them, agreeable, to the Laws of *God*; but moreover, that, as to the very Manner of their Performance, they be ſo done, as to appear Graceful and Amiable in the Sight of Men.

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In order to this, ſuch Good and Wiſe Perſons are always careful to obſerve that Decency, which thoſe who have beſt underſtood it, have been more able to exemplify by Special Inſtances, than to deſcribe in General; which is the higheſt Perfection of every Art, and yet can be taught by none: which, where ever it is found, doth by a Secret irreſiſtible Force, move our Amiration, tho' we cannot diſtinctly aſſign what it is we ſo readily applaud: which pleaſeth the niceſt Judges, and at the ſame time takes equally with the Unskilful; which, in in a word, all Men agree to extol where ever it doth apper, but which only Perſons of great Prudence, as well as unqueſtionable Integrity, are able to ſhew forth in all their Actions.

Theſe have an accurate Diſcernment of what is, upon every occaſion, fit and agreeable: Theſe know exactly how to make a judicious Choice of that which is not only ſuitable to the Laws of Reaſon, as they are Men, and to the Holineſs of their Profeſſion, as they are Chriſtians, but is alſo agreeable to their particular Condition, and to that peculiar Station, which they are to Adorn: Theſe can adapt themſelves aright to all Circumſtances, and fit every thing they do to its peculiar Time and Place: Theſe are acquainted with the Temper, Sentiments, and Intereſts of thoſe, with whom they are converſant, and foreſeeing what is moſt likely to gain their Good-eſteem, can take care ſo to demean themſelves, as may beſt procure it: Theſe have carefully obſerv'd what it is, which uſually leſſen the Credit of Good Actions, and therefore are prepar'd to uſe all Diligence to avoid the like occaſions of Offence.

Theſe are the Perſons, who, by their excelling in Wiſdom, as well as Virtue, do Honour to the Religion which they profeſs: Theſe are they, who muſt retrieve its Reputation in a looſe and profligate Age. We live amongſt Men, who will not give themſelves the trouble to examine the Grounds of our Holy Faith, but reject it in the Groſs, and condemn it without Trial. If they can diſcover any the leaſt Failing, or if they can pitch upon any Indiſcret Action in thoſe who pretend to believe the Goſpel, and to act by its Rules, this they greedily lay hold of, as a juſt Prejudice againſt Religion its ſelf: and if we appeal from the Vices and Follies of the *Chriſtians* of our own Age, to the Exemplary Virtue and Singular Wiſdom of thoſe who firſt preach' and embrac'd it, ſuch Men are ready to call in queſtion the Truth of thoſe pretended Originals, of which they can ſee no Copies: But if we can point out unto them Men, who prove the Sincerity of their Faith by the Holineſs of their Lives, whoſe Actions are agreeable to their Principles, and who are as conſpicuous for their Wiſdom as for their Integrity; whoſe ſober Converſation and Manners will bear the moſt rigorous Teſt, and in whom the moſt malicious Wit can find no Weakneſs and Indiſcretion to expoſe and ridicule, then the Mouth of Profaneſs is preſently ſtopt, and the Infidel is convinc'd and ſilenc'd; and having nothing to object to the Religious and Wiſe Conduct of ſuch Men, is forc'd to confeſs, That *GOD is in them of a truth.*

And as it is for Perſons of this Character alone, that we can hope for a Reparation to the Honour of our Holy Religion, ſo is it from Perſons endow'd

dow'd with the ſame Qualifications of Integrity and Wiſdom, that a divided Church, and a diſtracted Nation muſt hope for the Healing of their Wounds, and Reſtoring of their Breaches: For, next to the Grace of *GOD*, which inſpires Men with an hearty Deſire of Concord, and to the Guidance of his Holy Spirit, which directs them in the purſuit of *ſuch things as make for Peace*; no Means are more likely to put an end to our Differences, and to reconcile the Minds of Fellow-Citizens, and Fellow-Chriſtians, unhappily tearing one another to pieces, and ripping up the very Bowels of their Common Parent by their Mutual Diſſentions, than the honeſt Endeavours and ſage Counſels of ſuch Illuſtrious Worthies, on whoſe Integrity all Men can ſafely rely, that they will not willingly betray the Publick Intereſt, and on whoſe Prudence all Men can entirely depend, that they will not, thro' Ignorance, miſtake it.

From Perſons thus Qualified, We may promiſe Our-ſelves the ſtrongeſt Succours againſt the open Aſſaults, and ſecrets Attempt of the Church of *Rome*. Their Sagacity will penetrate into the moſt intricate Deſigns of *Popiſh* Treachery; and their Integrity will ſtand firm againſt the bold Encroachments of *Papal* Uſurpation. They are too honeſt to be brib'd out of their Religion by the proſpect of Intereſt, and they are too wiſe to be cheated out of it by the deluſion of *Sophiſtry*. They were Peſons of this Character, who, when in a late Reign, *Popery*, like an Inundation, was breaking in upon Us, bravely ſtood in the Gap, and reſiſted the Torrent: and Perſons of this Character will always go on ſteadily and conſcientiouſly to oppoſe *Popery*, tho' they ſhould be traduc'd as favourers of it by thoſe very Men, who, in that Day of our diſtreſs, were buſy in breaking down thoſe Fences, by which alone it was to be kept out

The Craft of *Popiſh* Emiſſaries, void of all Honeſty, may ſuggeſt; and ſome Well-meaning, but miſtaken *Proteſtants*, may poſſibly entertain Fears of danger from the pretended *Popery* of the Church of *England*: but ſuch Jealouſies will never prevail with Perſone, who are Wiſe as well as Honeſt, to do any thing for the Weakning of that Eſtabliſhment, which, under *God*, is our beſt *Security* againſt the real *Popery* of the Church of *Rome*.

The Courage of ſuch Men will vigrouſly oppoſe our cruel Enemies, when they appear in their own proper form of Ravenous and Devouring Wolves; and their Caution will deſcry them, when, for the deluding of unwary Souls, they put on Sheep's cloathing; Honeſt and Wiſe Men are neither to be frighted by thoſe *Anathema's*, which our Adverſaries thunder out againſt *Hereſy* in their General Councils; nor to be caught by the crafty Willineſs of theſe Impoſtors, when, under a falſe Diſguiſe, they rail againſt Forms of Prayer, againſt Superſtitious Rites, and againſt *Antichriſt* (as, from unqueſtionable Authority We know they have ſometimes done) in the Separate Aſſemblies of deluded Sectaries. Whether theſe Enemies of our Conſtitution would overthrow it by laying *Gun-Powder* under our Houſes of *Parliament*, or by ſcattering the Seeds of Diviſion amongſt Us; We may hope, that their wicked Purpoſes will ſtill be defeated by Perſons

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always Vigilant, always Zealous for preſerving our Eſtabliſh'd Church and Government.

Men of Prudence cannot but be careful to prevent the Growth of that Power, which threatens Ruin to all to their Civil Intereſts; Men of Conſcience will never fail to oppoſe that Religion, which is deſtructive of their Spiritual Welfare.

Perſons of approv'd Integrity will faithfully maintain the good Laws already made for excluding ſuch from the Supream Government of our Church, who are by Principles engag'd to deſtroy it; and Perſons of ſingular Wiſdom will find out ſuch Expedients, as may be ſtill neceſſary for our farther Security.

No Humane Methods, can be lawfully us'd in order to our Preſervation, will eſcape the Sagacity of ſuch Men; and whilſt they take care to adorn the Holineſs of their Profeſſion by the Sanctity of their Lives, whilſt their Manners are Reform'd as well as their Faith, We may hope, that the Bleſſing of *GOD* will go along with their Honeſt Endeavours.

Great Bleſſing might a Nation expect, great Support might be given to our Eſtabliſh'd Church, great Honour might redound to our Holy Religion, even from a few Perſons, Eminent for theſe Qualifications; Men of warm Hearts, and cool Heads; Zealous, but with Diſcretion; Honeſt, but not Weak; Wiſe, but not Crafty: In ſhort, Strict Obſervers of this Divine Precept of our Bleſſed *Lord*; and genuine Diſciple of Him, in whom *were hidden all the Treaſure of Wiſdom; who did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth.*

To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, Three Perſons and One God be all Honour, Glory, Dominion, and Power, both Now, and for Evermore.

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